

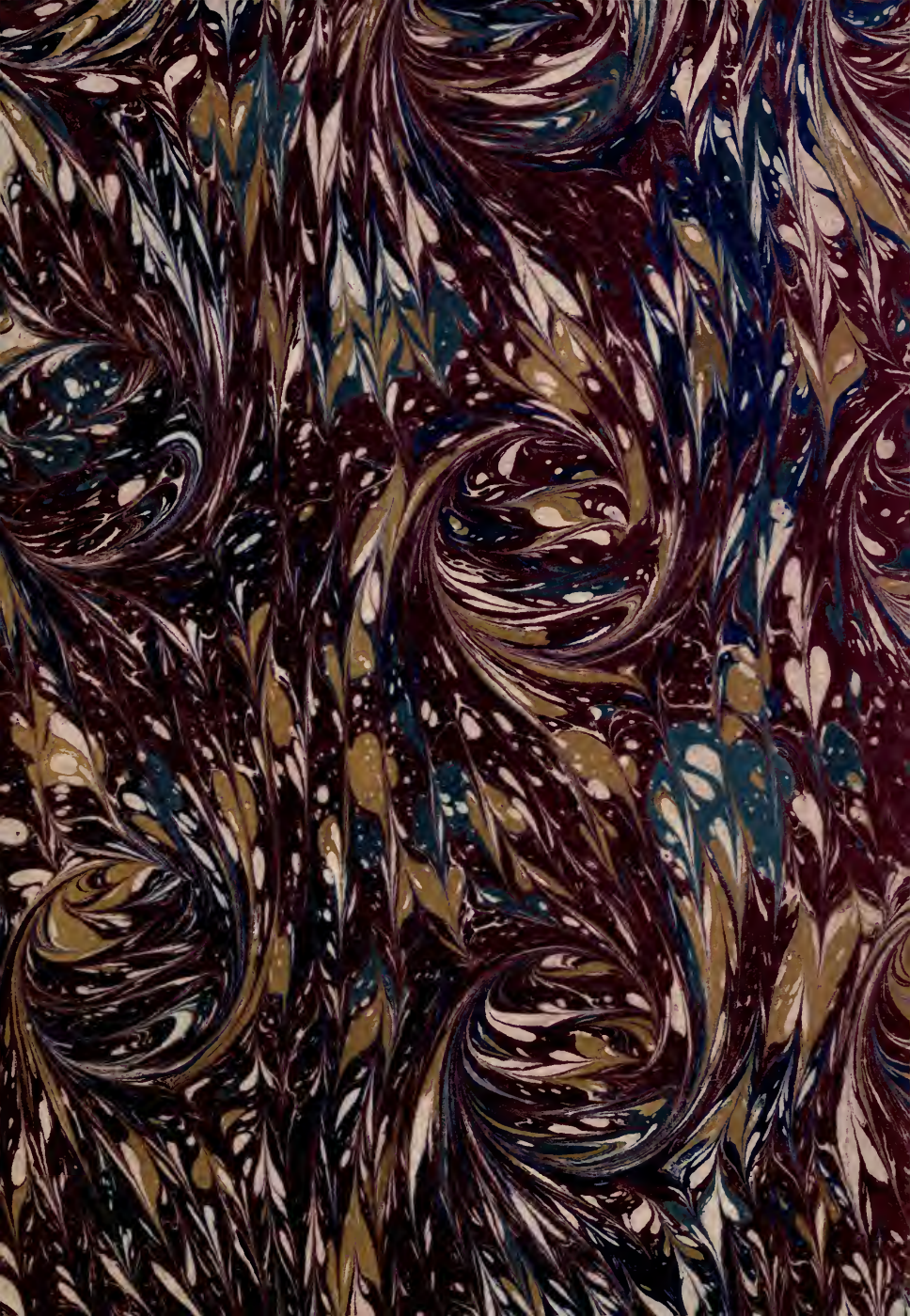
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Miss Louise Deems

A slight remembrance from

A Friend.

Christmas, 1877.



CHRISTMASTIDE

CONTAINING

FOUR FAMOUS POEMS BY FAVORITE AMERICAN
POETS

With Illustrations



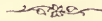
BOSTON
JAMES R. OSGOOD AND COMPANY
LATE TICKNOR & FIELDS, AND FIELDS, OSGOOD, & Co.
1878

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Contents.

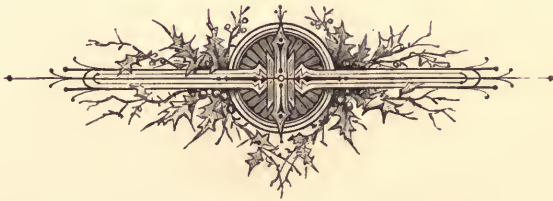


THE RIVER PATH . BY JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

EXCELSIOR BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

THE ROSE BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

BABY BELL BY THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH.



List of Illustrations.

ENGRAVED BY A. V. S. ANTHONY.



THE RIVER PATH.

- “The tangled bank below was still” T. MORAN.
“No rustle from the birchen stem” WM. HART.
“The dusk of twilight round us grew” J. A. BROWN.
“We saw the hill-tops glorified” S. COLMAN.
“A tender glow, exceeding fair” J. A. BROWN.
“A dream of day without its glare” A. V. S. ANTHONY.
“While dark, through willowy vistas seen” . . . J. McENTEE.
“We gazed upon those hills of God” A. R. WAUD.
“Beckoned our dear ones gone before” JESSIE CURTIS.
Group of Cherubs JESSIE CURTIS.
“The voices lost to mortal ear” JESSIE CURTIS.
“The hills swung open to the light” S. COLMAN.
“Down glade and glen and bank it rolled” . . . W. HART.
 “ When our feet draw near
The river dark ” T. MORAN.

List of Illustrations.

"On thy eternal hills look forth" A. R. WAUD.
Tail-Piece A. V. S. ANTHONY.
Vignette — Violets H. V. ANTHONY.

EXCELSIOR.

"The shades of night were falling fast" A. R. WAUD.
"A youth, who bore, mid snow and ice" W. HOMER.
"His brow was sad; his eye beneath
Flashed like a falchion from its sheath" W. HOMER.
"In happy homes he saw the light" T. MORAN.
"'Try not the Pass!' the old man said" A. R. WAUD.
"The roaring torrent's deep and wide" T. MORAN.
"'O stay,' the maiden said" W. HOMER.
"Beware the pine-tree's withered branch" J. McENTEE.
"A voice replied far up the height" T. MORAN.
"The pious Monks of St. Bernard" CHARLES KENDRICK.
"A voice cried through the startled air" A. R. WAUD.
Convent of St. Bernard A. R. WAUD.
"Lifeless, but beautiful he lay" W. HOMER.
Tail-Piece A. V. S. ANTHONY.
Vignette — Alpine Flowers F. T. MERRILL.

List of Illustrations.

THE ROSE.

- "In his tower sat the poet" C. S. REINHART.
"On the rock the billow bursteth" R. SWAIN GIFFORD.
"Take, O sea! the tender blossom" . . . C. S. REINHART.
"Forth into the night he hurled it" . . . A. V. S. ANTHONY.
"Foam and spray drive back to leeward" . A. R. WAUD.
"Stands a maiden, on the morrow" . . . MARY HALLOCK FOOTE.
"Touch not, sea, the blessed letters" . . . A. V. S. ANTHONY.
"Brings a little rose, and throws it" . . . C. S. REINHART.
"Full of bliss she takes the token" . . . MARY HALLOCK FOOTE.
"The ocean's fierce unrest" R. SWAIN GIFFORD.
"In his tower sits the poet" C. S. REINHART.
"Up the beach the ocean slideth" A. V. S. ANTHONY.
"Maiden lips, with love grown bolder" . . C. S. REINHART.
Tail-Piece A. V. S. ANTHONY.
Vignette—Rose F. T. MERRILL.

BABY BELL.

- "How came the dainty Baby Bell" JESSIE CURTIS.
"O'er which the white-winged angels go" . . . JESSIE CURTIS.

List of Illustrations.

- “The celestial asphodels” A. V. S. ANTHONY.
Lilies of the Valley A. V. S. ANTHONY.
“The swallows built beneath the eaves” . . . T. MORAN.
“O'er the porch the trembling vine” A. R. WAUD.
“Baby, dainty Baby Bell” JESSIE CURTIS.
 “The light
Of those oped gates of Paradise” JESSIE CURTIS.
“The mother's being ceased on earth” . . . JESSIE CURTIS.
“And now the orchards, which were white” . . J. A. BROWN.
“The grapes hung purpling in the grange” . . F. T. MERRILL.
“Her lissome form more perfect grew” . . . JESSIE CURTIS.
“Around her pale angelic brow
We saw a slender ring of flame” JESSIE CURTIS.
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That held the portals of her speech” . . . JESSIE CURTIS.
“We never held her being's key” JESSIE CURTIS.
“We saw its shadow ere it fell” JESSIE CURTIS.
“All our hopes were changed to fears” . . . JESSIE CURTIS.
The Reaper Angel JESSIE CURTIS.
“At last he came, the messenger” JESSIE CURTIS.
Tail-Piece A. V. S. ANTHONY.

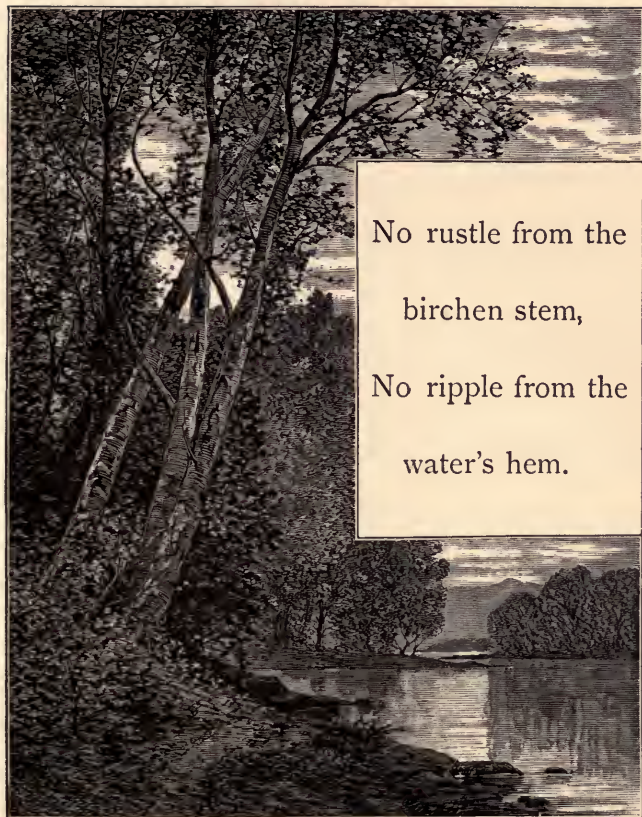




THE RIVER PATH.

No bird-song floated down the hill,
The tangled bank below was still ;

The River Path.



No rustle from the
birchen stem,
No ripple from the
water's hem.

The River Path.

The dusk of twilight round us grew,
We felt the falling of the dew;



For, from us, ere the day was done,
The wooded hills shut out the sun.

The River Path.



But on the river's farthest side
We saw the hilltops glorified,—

The River Path.



A tender glow, exceeding fair,

A dream of day without its glare.



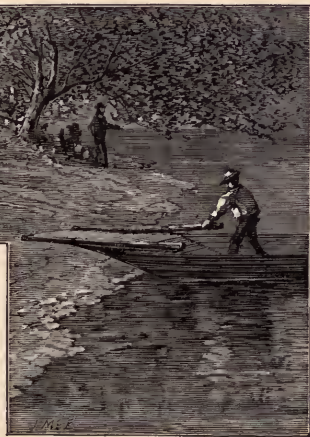
The River Path.

With us the damp, the chill, the gloom:

With them the sunset's rosy bloom;

While dark, through

willowy vistas seen,



The river rolled in
shade between.

The River Path.

From out the darkness where we trod,
We gazed upon those hills of God,



Whose light seemed not of moon or sun.
We spake not, but our thought was one.

The River Path.



We paused, as if from that bright shore

Beckoned our dear ones gone before;



The River Path.

And stilled our beating
hearts to hear



The voices lost to mortal ear!

The River Path.



Sudden our pathway turned from night;

The hills swung open to the light;

Through their green gates the sunshine

showed,

A long, slant splendor downward flowed.

The River Path.



Down glade and glen
and bank it rolled ;
It bridged the shaded
stream with gold ;

And, borne on piers of mist, allied
The shadowy with the sunlit side !

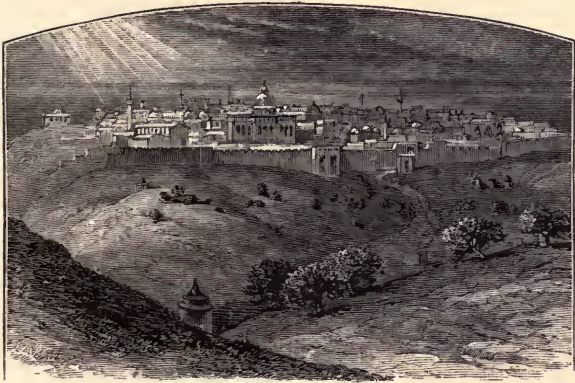
The River Path.

“ So,” prayed we, “ when our feet draw near
The river dark, with mortal fear,



“ And the night cometh chill with dew,
O Father! let thy light break through!

The River Path.



“So let the hills of doubt divide,
So bridge with faith the sunless tide!

“So let the eyes that fail on earth
On thy eternal hills look forth;

The River Path.

“ And in thy beckoning angels know
The dear ones whom we loved below!”









EXCELSIOR.

THE shades of night were falling fast,
As through an Alpine village passed

Excelsior.



A youth, who bore, mid snow and ice,

A banner with the strange device,

Excelsior!

Excelsior.

His brow was sad; his eye beneath
Flashed like a falchion from its sheath,



And like a silver clarion rung
The accents of that unknown tongue,
Excelsior!

Excelsior.



In happy homes he saw the light
Of household fires gleam warm and bright.
Above, the spectral glaciers shone,
And from his lips escaped a groan,
· Excelsior!

Excelsior.

“ Try not the Pass ! ”

the old man said ;

“ Dark lowers the

tempest overhead,



Excelsior.



The roaring torrent's deep and wide!"

And loud that clarion voice replied,

Excelsior!

Excelsior.

“O stay,” the maiden said, “and rest
Thy weary head upon this breast!”



A tear stood in his bright blue eye,
But still he answered, with a sigh,
Excelsior!

Excelsior.



“ Beware the pine-tree’s withered branch!

Beware the awful avalanche!”

Excelsior.



This was the peasant's
last Good-night,

A voice replied far up the height,

Excelsior!

Excelsior.

At break of day, as heavenward



The pious monks of Saint Bernard

Uttered the oft-repeated prayer,

Excelsior.



A voice cried through the startled air,

Excelsior!

Excelsior.

A traveller, by the faithful hound,
Half-buried in the snow was found,
Still grasping in his hand of ice
That banner with the strange device,
Excelsior!



Excelsior.



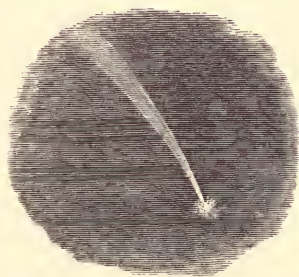
There in the twilight cold and gray,
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay,

Excelsior.

And from the sky, serene and far,

A voice fell, like a falling star,

Excelsior!



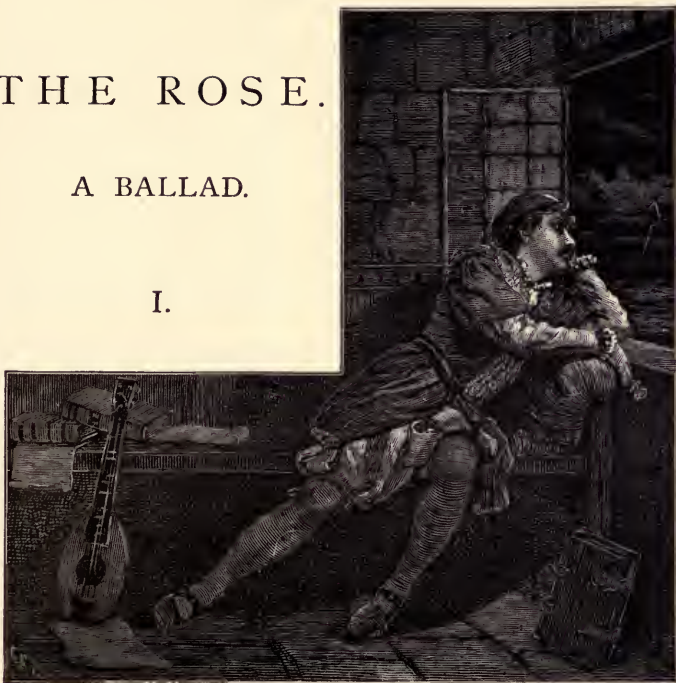




THE ROSE.

A BALLAD.

I.



In his tower sat the poet

Gazing on the roaring sea,

The Rose.

“Take this rose,” he sighed, “and throw it

Where there ’s none that loveth me.

On the rock the billow bursteth

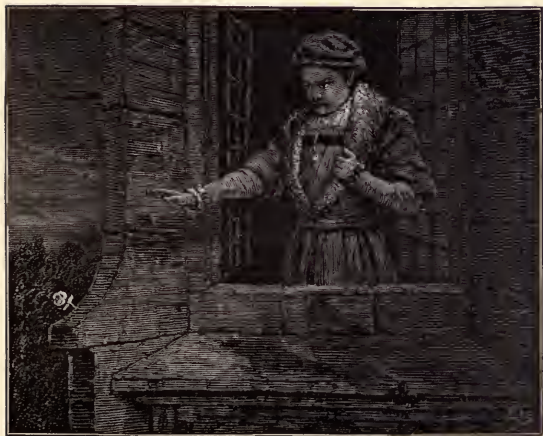
And sinks back into the seas,



The Rose.

But in vain my spirit thirsteth

So to burst and be at ease.



Take, O sea! the tender blossom

That hath lain against my breast;

The Rose.

On thy black and angry bosom

It will find a surer rest.

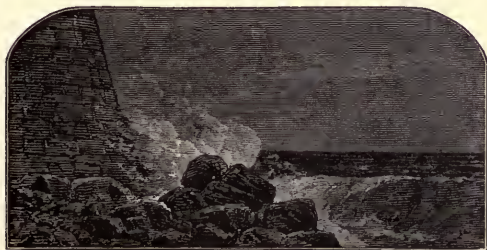
Life is vain, and love is hollow,

Ugly death stands there behind,

Hate and scorn and hunger follow

Him that toileth for his kind."

Forth into the night he hurled it,



The Rose.

And with bitter smile did mark
How the surly tempest whirled it
Swift into the hungry dark.
Foam and spray drive back to leeward,



And the gale, with dreary moan,
Drifts the helpless blossom seaward,
Through the breakers all alone.



II.

Stands a maiden, on the morrow,
Musing by the wave-beat strand,

The Rose.

Half in hope and half in sorrow

Tracing words upon the sand:

“Shall I ever then behold him

Who hath been my life so long,—

Ever to this sick heart fold him,—

Be the spirit of his song?

Touch not, sea, the blessed letters

I have traced upon thy shore,



The Rose.

Spare his name whose spirit fetters

Mine with love forevermore!"



Swells the tide and overflows it,

But, with omen pure and meet,

Brings a little rose, and throws it

Humbly at the maiden's feet.

The Rose.



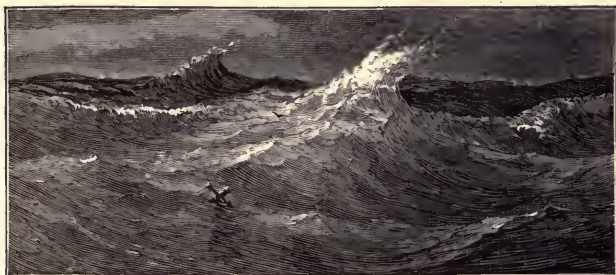
Full of bliss she takes the token,

And, upon her snowy breast,

The Rose.

Soothes the ruffled petals broken

With the ocean's fierce unrest.

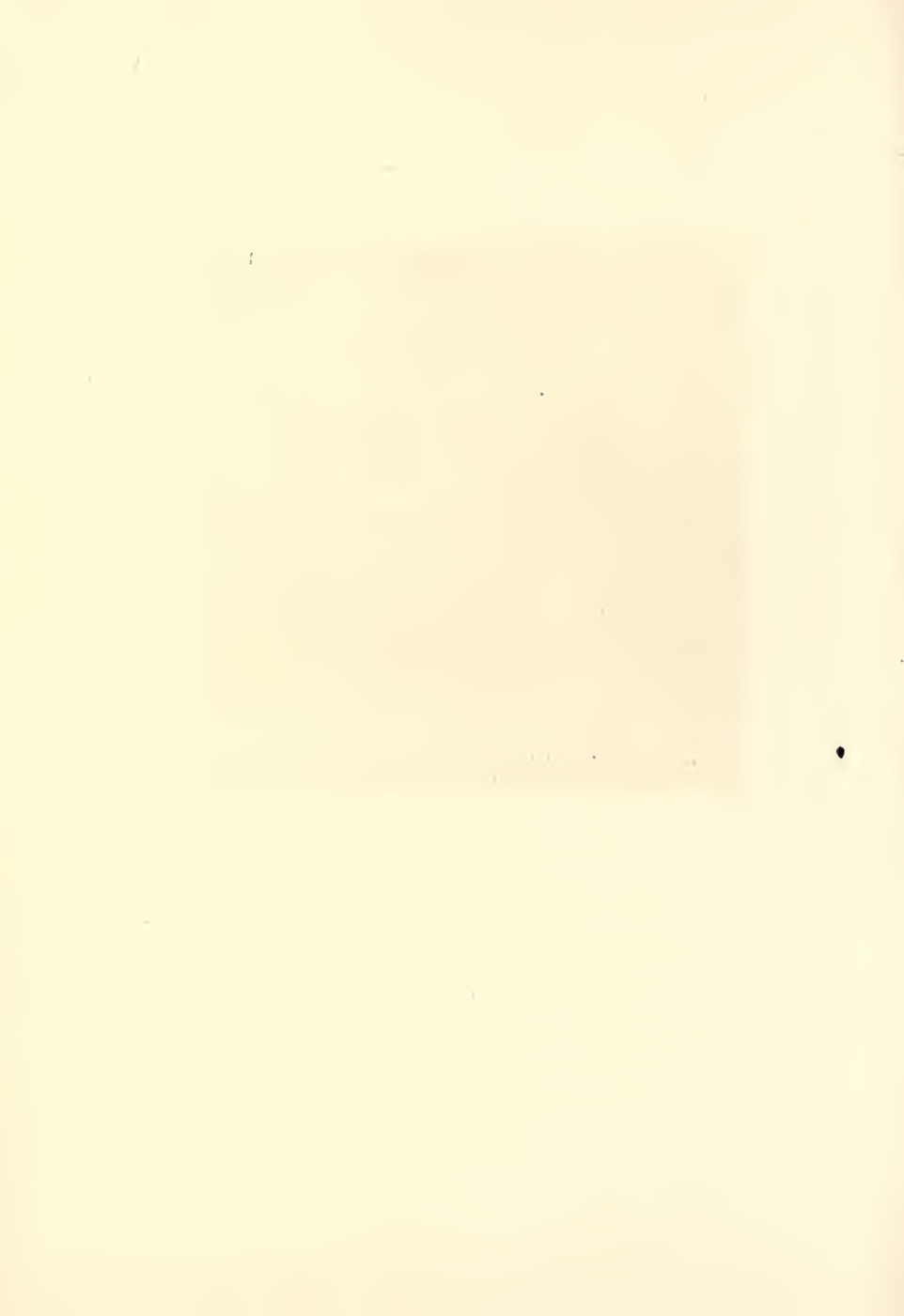


“Love is thine, O heart! and surely

Peace shall also be thine own,

For the heart that trusteth purely

Never long can pine alone.”





III.

In his tower sits the poet,

Blisses new and strange to him

The Rose.

Fill his heart and overflow it

With a wonder sweet and dim.

Up the beach the ocean slideth

With a whisper of delight,



And the moon in silence glideth

Through the peaceful blue of night.

Rippling o'er the poet's shoulder

The Rose.



Flows a maiden's golden hair,
Maiden lips, with love grown bolder,
Kiss his moonlit forehead bare.
"Life is joy, and love is power,
Death all fetters doth unbind,

The Rose.

Strength and wisdom only flower

When we toil for all our kind.

Hope is truth,— the future giveth

More than present takes away,

And the soul forever liveth

Nearer God from day to day.”

Not a word the maiden uttered,

Fullest hearts are slow to speak,

But a withered rose-leaf fluttered

Down upon the poet's cheek.







BABY BELL.

I.



HAVE you not heard the poets tell

How came the dainty Baby Bell

Into this world of ours?

The gates of heaven were left ajar:

Baby Bell.

With folded hands and dreamy eyes,

Wandering out of Paradise,

She saw this planet, like a star,

 Hung in the glistening depths of even,—

Its bridges, running to and fro,

O'er which the white-winged Angels go,



Baby Bell.

Bearing the holy Dead to heaven.

She touched a bridge of flowers, — those feet,

So light they did not bend the bells

Of the celestial asphodels,

They fell like dew upon the flowers:

Then all the air grew strangely sweet!

And thus came dainty Baby Bell

Into this world of ours.





II.

She came and brought

delicious May.

The swallows built

beneath the eaves;

Like sunlight, in

and out the leaves

The robins went, the livelong day;

Baby Bell.

The lily swung its noiseless bell ;

And o'er the porch the trembling vine

Seemed bursting with its veins of wine.

How sweetly, softly,

twilight fell !

O, earth was full

of singing-birds



And opening
springtide flowers,

When the dainty Baby Bell

Came to this world of ours !

III.

O Baby, dainty Baby Bell,
How fair she grew from day to day!
What woman-nature filled her eyes,



What poetry within them lay,—
Those deep and tender twilight eyes,

Baby Bell.

So full of meaning, pure and bright
As if she yet stood in the light
Of those oped gates of Paradise.
And so we loved her more and more:
Ah, never in our hearts before
Was love so lovely born!
We felt we had a link between
This real world and that unseen,—



Baby Bell.

The land beyond the morn;
And for the love of those dear eyes,
For love of her whom God led forth,
(The mother's being ceased on earth
When Baby came from Paradise,)—
For love of Him who smote our lives,
And woke the chords of joy and pain,
We said, *Dear Christ!*—our hearts bent down
Like violets after rain.





IV.

And now the orchards, which were white
And red with blossoms when she came,
Were rich in autumn's mellow prime ;

Baby Bell.

The clustered apples burnt like flame,
The soft-cheeked peaches blushed and fell,

The ivory chestnut

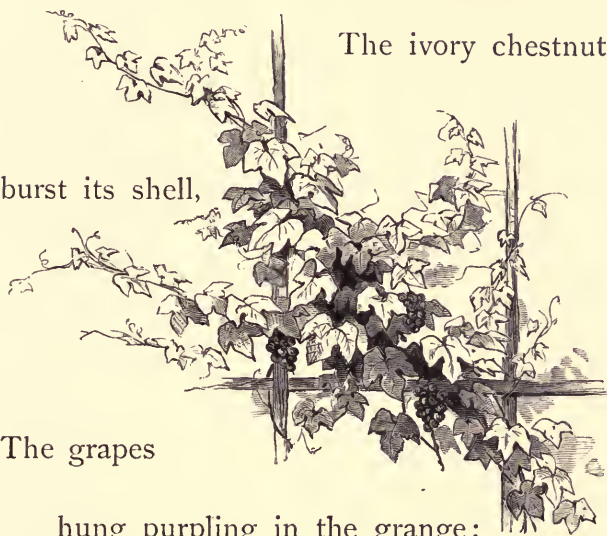
burst its shell,

The grapes

hung purpling in the grange:

And time wrought just as rich a change

In little Baby Bell.



Baby Bell.



Her lissome form more perfect grew,
And in her features we could trace,
In softened curves, her mother's face.

Baby Bell.

Her angel-nature ripened too:

We thought her lovely when she came,

But she was holy, saintly now . . .

Around her pale angelic brow

We saw a slender ring of flame!





V.

God's hand had taken away the seal

That held the portals of her speech ;

And oft she said a few strange words

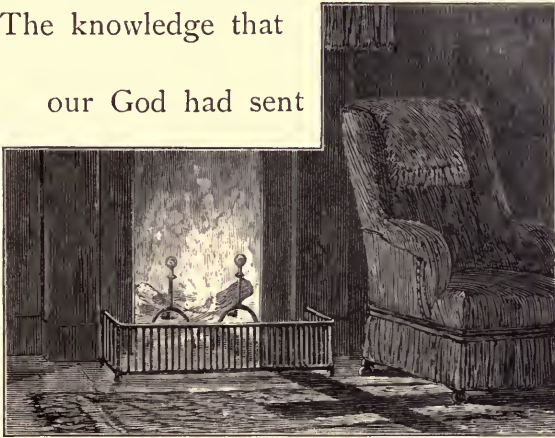
Baby Bell.

Whose meaning lay beyond our reach.
She never was a child to us,
We never held her being's key;
We could not teach her holy things:
She was Christ's self in purity.



VI.

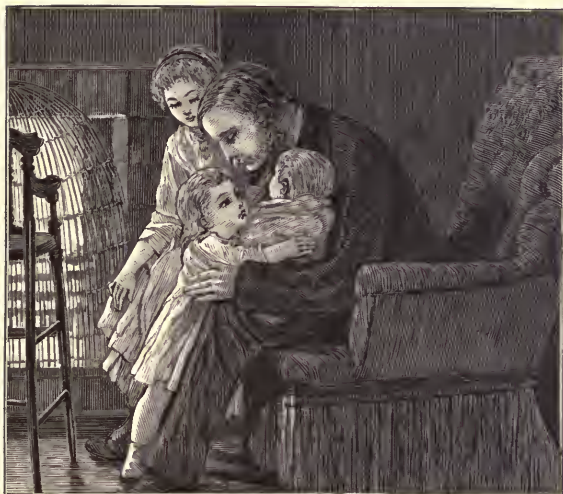
It came upon us by degrees,
We saw its shadow ere it fell,—
The knowledge that
our God had sent



His messenger for Baby Bell.

We shuddered with unlanguage pain,

Baby Bell.



And all our hopes were changed to fears,

And all our thoughts ran into tears

Like sunshine into rain.

We cried aloud in our belief,

Baby Bell.

“O, smite us gently, gently, God!
Teach us to bend and kiss the rod,
And perfect grow through grief.”
Ah! how we loved her, God can tell;
Her heart was folded deep in ours.
Our hearts are broken, Baby Bell!





VII.

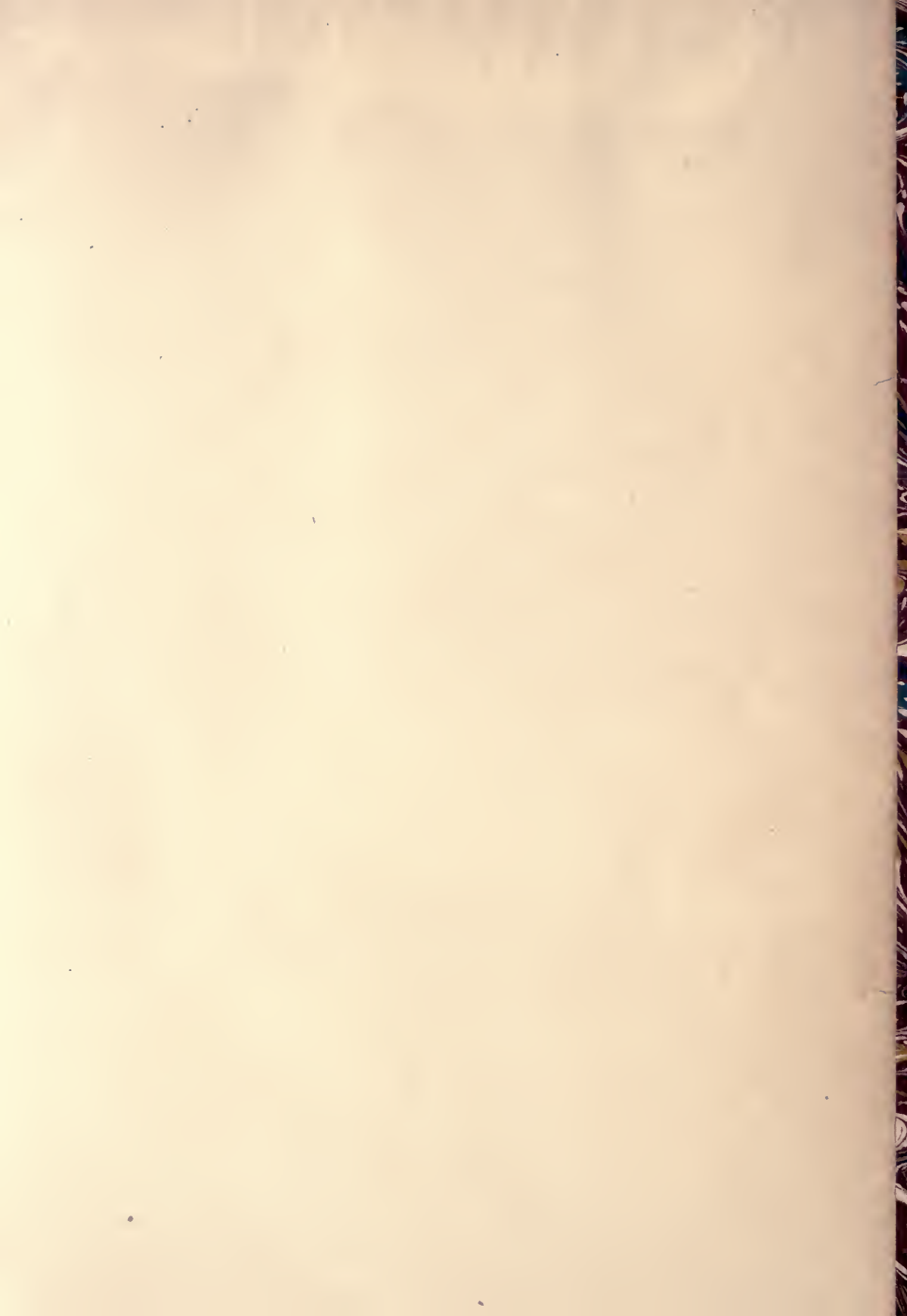
At last he came, the messenger,
The messenger from unseen lands:
And what did dainty Baby Bell?

Baby Bell.

She only crossed her little hands,
She only looked more meek and fair!
We parted back her silken hair,
We wove the roses round her brow,—
White buds, the summer's drifted snow,—
Wrapt her from head to foot in flowers . . .
And thus went dainty Baby Bell
Out of this world of ours!







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